



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**WEST BANK/GAZA**

USAID/ Public Awareness, Communication Strategy, and Community Outreach Project

# QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT

Q4, FY09: July 1, 2009 – September 30, 2009

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## I. Introduction

This past quarter of Al Nasher's project with USAID constituted the culmination of the communications activities of this project throughout the first year. The past three months successfully combined all elements of the project including public awareness campaign and events, community outreach, public relations, media relations, and strong coordination with USAID partners.

The past quarter witnessed a surge of USAID activities in general including numerous project inaugurations and other activities attended by USAID Mission Director, US Consul General, Palestinian Prime Minister Fayyad and a number of other Palestinian Authority officials.

The launch of the major USAID public awareness campaign under the theme "Step by Step, we Build & Develop" during this same period had a very positive effect on the reliability of the campaign messages. When people read the billboards message "build and develop" they felt the meaning of this through USAID projects in their local communities.

There is a noticeable change on the ground in the public awareness of USAID logo due to its association with a slew of project across many sectors that are serving the Palestinians across the West Bank. Surveys conducted for USAID in January and September put the USAID logo recognition at 40% and 42% respectively. Recent baseline survey conducted as part of this project by the Jerusalem Media & Communications Center (JMCC) both in West Bank and Gaza Strip indicate that 57% of the respondents have seen the USAID logo before.

"The red white and blue logo of USAID with the words "From the American people" appeared everywhere at the event and on the back of the T-shirts of all participants. The fact that USAID is sponsoring a youth event might not be totally strange in itself. But to have the American aid's logo brandished all over the streets of Ramallah, on outdoor signs and on the back of a moving sea of people really surprised me.

...

I don't remember a day in the last 20 years or more that I could see American symbols being worn without those wearing them or people around them batting an eyelid about it."

– August 2009

Palestinian Journalist, Dahoud Kuttab

This report will summarize the activities conducted during the past three months in all areas of the project's operations.

## 2 Public Awareness Activities

### 2.1 Finalization of Public Awareness Media Campaign Creative Theme

After conducting community consultations through focus group discussion with various target groups last July, Al Nasher creative and media teams finalized the development of the creative designs of the media campaign for newspapers and billboards in addition to producing a spot for local radio.

A second round of focus groups was held towards the end of July in order to evaluate the creative designs and consult with the community on the designs, message, and final theme. In general, the reaction of the participants were positive to the creative theme, design, colors, and characters used. Three focus groups were held with youth from Ramallah and Nablus districts.

#### Campaign Radio Script

Language: local dialect

Type: testimonial

(Background) a nurse calling a patient and directing her to the radiology ward

A lady: I'm from Jenin- I am receiving treatment at Jenin Hospital and frankly I am so happy with the services it provides now

(Background) sounds of a young man lecturing

Young man: I'm from Bethlehem, I've participated in a number of workshops and attended leadership courses and today I am teaching youth leadership skills.

(Background) a school bell ringing and children sounds

A girl (10 years old): I'm from Nablus- I study at Iraq Al Tayeh school. I love my school with its bigger, newer and comfortable classrooms

Narrator: 15 years of cooperation to improve health and education services, infrastructure and empower Palestinian youth

(Music)

Narrator: Step by Step... we build and develop.

Narrator: United States Agency for International Development (USAID) from the American People



Sample Campaign Creative Design

## 2.2 Launch of Public Awareness Media Campaign

The media campaign aimed to reach Palestinians from all walks of life, connecting with them through various media outlets, including billboards, newspapers, and local radio stations.

### Major Highlights:

- The media campaign was launched after the mid of July 2009.
- Radio campaign: started on the 26<sup>th</sup> of July and included 14 radio stations covering all areas of the West Bank. During the duration of the campaign a total of 4000 radio spots were aired.
- Newspapers campaign: started on the 26<sup>th</sup> of July and included Al Quds and Al Ayyam newspapers. The campaign included 33 newspaper advertisements in color.
- Billboard campaign: started on the 28<sup>th</sup> of July. The billboards campaign had 4,226 square meters covering all of the West Bank especially main road crossings to ensure it covers different audiences including residents of Palestinian cities, villages and refugee camps.

### Selected Photos for Billboard Locations



Bethlehem



Hebron



Nablus



Ramallah

Tulkarem



Al Ram

Currently, Al Nasher with USAID are working on the development of a television commercial which will be utilized along with other media forms such as electronic media in the second phase of the campaign. Initially, the idea was to put the TV spot on satellite station (mbc4) which is the most watched among Palestinians, but the cost is very prohibitive. Local TVs will be utilized to air the TV spot along with video advertisements on the Internet.

### 2.3 Public Awareness Event / Holiday Concert Sponsorship

As part of USAID efforts to create bigger public awareness of the agency and its work, a major public awareness event was organized during the Moslem holiday “Eid Al Fitir.” The activity constituted of a public outdoor concert at a family park in Jericho the famous Palestinian singer “Murad Al Sweiti.”

The activity was attended by an estimated audience of around 7,000 Palestinians. USAID representatives attended the event and spoke to the audience. USAID branded banners were used a week ahead to advertise the event. The event venue was also branded with banners at entrance and on stage. Radio spot were used on local radios across the West Bank to advertise the event and give USAID greetings to the Palestinian public for the Holidays.

This was a successful experience which provided USAID with high visibility and allowed USAID to share the holiday joy with Palestinian families.







### 3 Media & Media Outreach Activities

#### 3.1 Media Round Table Meeting

As part of USAID's media outreach efforts, a round table meeting was held with local and international media representatives. The meeting was attended by twenty media representatives representing local, regional, and some international agencies. Dr. Howard Sumka, USAID Mission Director started the meeting with an overview of USAID work and the five sectors it covers, and provided further details on each one of the sectors. Questions from journalists varied from clarifications of the natures of USAID's work in different sectors, USAID cash assistance to PA, infrastructure projects (roads) and settlements, vetting issues, support to the media, in addition to some political questions. During the round table, the USAID public awareness campaign was announced to the reporters.

Photos from the event



#### 3.2 Press Coverage & Success Stories

During this quarter, USAID received excellent coverage in the local media which was reflected in the clippings provided in the weekly media monitoring reports. In most cases, press releases were prepared by the USAID public relations team or the USAID partner project. In other cases, specifically during outreach activities, Al Nasher team prepared the press release and sent it to the news after approving it from USAID.

Al Nasher team invited the media to attend and cover all public relations and outreach activities conducted by the team in addition to a number of partner events. Photo documentation was done for all events and a few events were video tapped. Al Nasher provided USAID with a CD containing the best photos from all the events conducted through the year.

It is very important to publish success stories from the ground as a result of different project implementations and activities supported and funded by USAID. Through conducting various PR and



outreach activities, our team identified a very important success story that highlighted the importance of the USAID's role in supporting the sport and youth sector in the Palestinian society, specifically in the Southern Nablus area. The success story was published in the two main local newspapers.

### **3.3 Weekly Media Monitoring Reports**

Weekly media monitoring reports have been submitted to USAID/WBG. These reports included local newspapers, local news websites, and some international media coverage over the internet. News related to USAID, the US Government, and related agencies were also reported. The reports are an important tool to keep USAID DOC updated with the media coverage of USAID/WBG in the local media. The reports included the clippings, translated titles and summary in English, and an indication of whether the clipping is positive or negative. The reports were submitted by Monday morning OOB on weekly basis.

## 4 Community Outreach Activities

### 4.1 Summer Camp Clubs Tour

Summer camp activities provided an excellent opportunity to reach the Palestinian youth in communities all over the West Bank. Youth were presented with a story telling performances that gave the kids the space to interact and express the way they think & feel. In addition the youth were encouraged to perform as well during these events.

These activities provided a big audience for USAID to perform effective public awareness and outreach especially that a number of these activities included parent participation, which widened the targeted group and raised the opportunity of awareness through the areas where the events took place.

The idea came out as part of USAID strategy to develop effective communication tools to increase public awareness of USAID role to the Palestinian through community outreach.

As a result, ten events were arranged under the summer camps tour activities. The tour presented an excellent opportunity to reach Palestinian communities all over the West Bank (North, Center, and South). The camp gave Youth the opportunity to use part of their time in entertainment and increase their knowledge through their participation in the activities.

These events are important to use them as a venue to extend outreach to the rest of the community through word of mouth. In total, around 2500 Palestinians (Youth and Parents) attended these events.

The camp posed an excellent opportunity to distribute visibility items to the children. Through all the 10 events, the following visibility items were provided:

- Distribution of thousands of branded t-shirts and caps ensured a very high visibility for USAID logo among Palestinians across at least 10 local communities where the events were held.
- Branded event banner was used at every event.
- Candy bags for kids were also a nice idea to conclude the event.

Two surveys were filled during these events. The first survey was for the kids and it asked them about the activities they enjoy more in order to better design future events targeting this age group. The other questionnaires were filled pre and post the event by adult participants like volunteers and parents. Overall, the surveys reflected an increase in the awareness of USAID and its role.

Selected Photos from the Events





## 4.2 Sports Youth Summer Camp

In order to build on past successes, and in continuation to USAID efforts and its long support for Palestinian sports in activities such as coaching the coaches, Women soccer, and distribution of sports gear to Palestinian public schools, USAID was interested in sponsoring a unique Summer sports camp in the south of Nablus.

The activity covered more than 30 villages in south Nablus including 75 schools. The sport summer camp was organized to training the directorate's basketball, volleyball, handball and gymnastics teams.

The sports camp included 2 major public relations events; the opening and closing ceremonies. Both ceremonies witnessed the participation of key official from the southern Nablus area. Speeches were held by the director of education in the area, the Director of Beita Club where the opening was held, the supervisor of sports in the area of south Nablus, Akraba Mayor where the closing ceremony was held & USAID representatives in both events.

Through the camp, 70 players were nominated at the beginning to be trained by specialists in basketball; volleyball, football & gymnastic. Finally, 45 were chosen at the end of the camp to participate in the governorate teams at the end of the camp.

Branded t-shirts and caps were distributed that ensured a very high visibility for USAID logo among Palestinian trainees and in their local communities. In addition, another event will be organized in the coming two months to revisit the teams and check on their progress and distribute USAID branded sports uniforms which these teams will use as they compete in the national championships.

A success story was prepared & published in the local newspapers, which reflected the importance of USAID's role in sponsoring such an activity.

Selected Photos from the camp:



### 4.3 Ramadan Sports Tournaments (In cooperation with CEP/ARD)

This activity is an example of enhancing an existing activity through providing visibility items and arranging for PR event in cooperation with a USAID partner. In its efforts to improve the daily lives of Palestinians, and enhance responsiveness of local leadership, ARD seeks to empower and enhance the credibility of the clubs among the local community. ARD as a USAID partner conducted several activities during the month of Ramadan in the North and South of the West Bank. This was an opportunity for USAID to empower their relations with the local community, and strengthen the relations with youth clubs in the local communities.

Al Nasher and according to USAID's recommendation had a meeting with ARD to coordinate and specify Al Nasher's role in supporting and taking part in the planned event.

ARD, in the Jenin area, is supporting four youth clubs: Jenin Sports Club, Al Yamoun Youth Sports Club, Ya'bad Sports Club, and Rummana Union Sports Club.

Football, basketball, and volleyball and chess tournaments were held during month of Ramadan in addition to a number of activities around these tournaments in the clubs. Al Nasher team in cooperation with ARD arranged for a final closing event for all the tournaments. Al Nasher team assisted in logistics, media coverage, branding and distribution of visibility items.



USAID branded visibility items were distributed at the event which gave the opportunity to raise the visibility of USAID at the event and beyond. The distributed items included branded outfits for the teams, trophies and medals for winners, and chess sets for the chess tournament participants.



#### 4.4 School Bags Distribution

Al Nasher was supposed to arrange with USAID for a large school bag distribution campaign to the new schools built as part of the INP project. Unfortunately, procurement issues delay the process and the project was delay. Meanwhile, a few hundred USAID branded school bags remained in storage from past years and it was agreed to distribute them to some needy students.

Four hundred bags were delivered to the Palestinian Workers Union to distribute to needy worker children. Around 300 other bags were presented to students in USAID built schools in the Jenin and Hebron areas. The activity supported needy students who were not able to buy new bags for the new school year.

The distribution took place around the “Eid” holiday and therefore was a good timing for this good will gesture. A branded USAID rollup with holiday greetings was used at the three school visits.

Selected Photos from the events



#### 4.5 International Youth Day Celebration (in cooperation with EDC/RUWWAD)

Al Nasher supported RUWWAD Project in the preparation & implementation of the International Youth Day, in which included the participation of Palestinians youth from all over the West Bank.

Al Nasher designed the theme for the event titled “Youth the Pulse of Life ... We will be as much as we can dream.”

The day was advertised through local newspapers (Al Quds and Al Ayyam) in addition to 10 radio stations with a total of 330 spots. In addition, 10,000 flyers, 13 banners, 500 posters were produced and distributed to cities all around the West Bank prior to the event.

The day started with a parade from Manara Square in Ramallah celebrating the youth. The parade started with the release of 1000 helium filled balloons in the air and proceeded until Ramallah Orthodox Club where the event took place. Local Boy Scout bands participated in the parade.

The day witnessed a number of activities including lectures on drugs and employment opportunities, screening of RUWWAD youth produced films, and performance of youth performing groups.

During the day, RUWWAD initiatives and partners utilized the setup booths to speak to the youth about their work and distributed their flyers (Also produced by Al Nasher team). This took place mostly during the morning period.

Event branding and setup of needed stage, sound and light systems in addition to media coverage was arranged by Al Nasher team. In addition, USAID branded t-shirts, caps, and pens were produced and distributed to the youth at the event.

Selected Photos from the event





## 5 Public Relations Events

Public relations events are important tool for USAID as it helps strengthening the relations with the Palestinian Authority and with its various Ministries. These events give USAID a great opportunity to showcase project accomplishments on the ground to the local community and to the media. In fact, we can always consider that these events act as public relations events in addition to being community outreach events.

Al Nasher, at the request of USAID, is playing a major role in the organization and implementation of a number of public relations events. During this quarter, three of these events were implemented:

### 5.1 Inauguration of Al Dahriyeh/Ramadeen, Hebron road

INP Project

Implementing Partner: MWH

July 21, 2009

Selected Photos



### 5.2 Opening of Jalboun School, Jenin

INP Project

Implementing Partner: MWH

August 15, 2009

Selected Photos



### 5.3 Flagship Nablus Activities Launch Event

Flagship

Implementing Partner: Chemonics

August 17, 2009

Selected Photos



## 6 Baseline Survey Research

A comprehensive survey covering a representative sample of 1,200 Palestinians over 18 years old and living in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem was conducted prior to the launch of the major public awareness campaign. Please note that other campaigns such as “Youth, the Pulse of Life” proceeded the survey along with numerous other activities conducted by this project and by other USAID partners. Hence, the results of the survey show some improvement in general Palestinian public perceptions towards USAID in comparison to earlier surveys conducted by USAID in 2008. Following are some of the major highlights of results:

### Knowledge of USAID

Slightly less than half (42%) of respondents have never heard of USAID or of the United States Agency for International Development, of those who have heard of either, more have heard of USAID compared to the United States Agency for International Development.

### USAID Visibility

Only 57% have seen the USAID logo, these were more likely to be males and to be more educated. The majority have seen this logo on posters and on project signs. 61% of the respondents stated that messages on these posters, signs and other promotional material were clear, 4% reported that these messages changed the perceptions of the USAID, 51% said that the messages provided the real picture of what the USAID is doing. In terms of the best way to promote for USAID, 37% stated the distribution of promotional material, while 20% seminars and conferences.

### Evaluation of USAID

31% of respondents stated that they have USAID projects in areas or communities they live in, yet 36% were not sure if such projects exist in their areas or not. Close to half (47%) of these projects were infrastructure related, followed by aid to the poor (35%). A high percentage of 58% said that the USAID is not doing enough to help Palestinians, and in terms of evaluation of their work, up to 29% stated that the assistance provided is average. Evaluation of the USAID was better from respondents who stated that they do have USAID projects in the areas or communities they live in.

The survey was conducted by our research sub contractors, the Jerusalem Media and Communications Center (JMCC).

## **7 Meetings & Coordination with USAID Partners**

Meeting with USAID partners is an important tool for Al Nasher to connect with other USAID partners. In general, coordination and cooperation with USAID partners have played an important role in many of the implemented activities during this past quarter. In addition to creating an added value to partner events, these events become more effective and produce higher visibility for USAID. These partners included CEP/ARD, Flagship, RUWWAD, and MWH.

During the last 3 months, Al Nasher had meetings with Flagship, Ruwaad, CHF & ARD. These meetings were used to discuss communications plans, events, and activities in order to gain better understanding of each partner's efforts and find ways to integrate with other activities such as community outreach. This partnership will help increase public awareness and generate positive perceptions towards USAID among Palestinians.

In order to increase cooperation with USAID partners, a selected number of USAID partners will be invited to join USAID DOC office and Al Nasher at a PR Retreat. The retreat will allow each partner to present their expected accomplishments for FY10 and their communications plans for the year. In addition, it will allow Al Nasher team as they develop the work plan for the next year with USAID to take into consideration all these activities and plan for them properly.

## 8 Conclusions & Remarks

In summary, these three months included extensive visibility for USAID. Through this project USAID organized and implemented a number of public relation events and many others directly with partners, in addition to outreach events, public awareness campaigns, and sponsorship of activities which significantly improved USAID's visibility among Palestinians. In addition, USAID received very high and positive coverage in the local and international media which was well received by the local communities who directly felt the effect of these projects on their daily lives.

During this past quarter, Al Nasher team put all their efforts to make up for the few months we lost during the Gaza Crisis. Implemented activities during this quarter were enormous in comparison to the size of the team working on their implementation. Fortunately we were able to get a lot of support from Al Nasher team in general. In addition, the support from our COTR and his colleagues at USAID was crucial in making this possible. As we plan for the next year, the staffing issue will be reviewed carefully to ensure we have the ability to continue developing this momentum for the remainder of the project.

It is important to highlight, that a fast paced interaction is needed between Al Nasher and USAID due to the nature of the activities and the required participation of USAID representatives, especially in outreach activities. In other cases, the extremely busy schedule of the USAID PR office limited our ability to implement some activities which require USAID feedback and approvals such as the newsletter, and USAID brochure. We will try to move these issues forward during the next year in coordination with USAID.

Finally, although our flexibility in dealing with the conditions allowed us to compensate for the lost time during the beginning of the project, changing plans was not easy and at times confusing and time consuming. We will take into considerations all lessons learnt when putting together the final work plan for the next year and we are confident it will also be a success.